

Videotaped Address to the People of Albania *June 21, 1999*

To the people of Albania, on behalf of all the American people, I want to express our gratitude for the courageous stand you have taken for peace, tolerance, and freedom in southeastern Europe. And I want to pledge my support for your own efforts to build a strong and prosperous democracy.

This spring, when Mr. Milosevic launched his bloody campaign of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, no country bore a greater burden than Albania, and no country did more to help humanity prevail. You opened your skies to the NATO aircraft that brought this nightmare to an end. You opened your ports and your airfields to the troops and aid workers who came here to help the refugees.

And most important, you opened your homes and your hearts to more than 300,000 victims of ethnic cleansing, giving them shelter and food and hope, even though your own country still faces enormous challenges. History will record that one of the greatest acts of barbarity Europe has seen in this century was defeated with the help of one of the greatest acts of compassion we have seen.

The whole world knows what you have done in the last several months. And we also know that you have done it while struggling to overcome perhaps the most cruel legacy of isolation and repression of any of Europe's formerly Communist states.

We still have much work to do. We have to work together to get the Kosovar refugees back to their homes safely. We'll have to keep helping those who must remain a while longer in Albania. We'll need to station more NATO troops in your country to support those keeping the peace in Kosovo. For the people of Albania,

there will be a continuing burden, but there will also be an opportunity to deepen your partnership with NATO and your integration with Europe and the future prosperity that will bring.

America will do all it can to help you recover from the economic and social upheaval caused by the war, to help you strengthen your democracy, to enshrine the rule of law, and to attract new investment to create new jobs and new opportunities. And we'll work with you to build a southeastern Europe that is coming together around the promise of freedom and prosperity, instead of being torn apart by hatred and bloodshed. We want you to be on the front lines of democracy and prosperous development in southeastern Europe, not on the front line of aggression and tyranny.

You have shown in this crisis that a nation's standing in the world is measured not just by its wealth, its power, or its size but also by the principles it upholds and the responsibilities it is willing to assume. The world's admiration for Albania has risen immeasurably in the last few months. If you stay on the path you have chosen, we will stay by your side.

I thank you for all you have done and for all we will do together in the months and years ahead.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 5:40 p.m. in the Bibliotek Room at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Cologne, Germany, on June 20 for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET. The transcript was embargoed for release until 4 p.m. on June 21. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia in Ljubljana *June 21, 1999*

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, I wonder if you could tell us what President Clinton's visit means to

your country, what you hope to get out of the visit?